

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEGUCI 03743 082002Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 /070 W  
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O R 081847Z AUG 78  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1151  
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE  
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 3743

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, PINR, MPOL, HO  
SUBJ: BIOGRAPHIS OF HONDURAS NEW MILITARY JUNTA

REF: (A) TEGUCIGALPA 3731, (B) TEGUCIGALPA 3737

1. FOLLOWING ARE BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES OF THE MEMBERS OF HONDURAS' NEW THREE-MAN MILITARY JUNTA APPOINTED BY SUPERIOR COUNCIL OF ARMED FORCES AUGUST 7. UNLIKE GENERAL MELGAR, WHO WAS APPOINTED CHIEF OF STATE BUT WAS NOT MEMBER OF COUNCIL, GENERAL PAZ AND LIEUTENANT COLONELS ALVAREZ AND ZELAYA RETAIN THEIR PREVIOUS COMMANDS (ARMED FORCES AND ARMY COMMANDER, AIR FORCE COMMANDER AND JUST NAMED NATIONAL POLICE COMMANDER RESPECTIVELY) AND THUS APPARENTLY THEIR SEATS ON THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL.

2. POLICARPO PAZ GARCIA. BORN 1932 IN DEPARTMENT OF VALLE. ENTERED ARMY AS PRIVATE IN 1949. COMMISSIONED IN 1954, STUDIED IN CANAL ZONE AND SPENT LARGE PART OF CAREER IN 1ST INFANTRY BATTALION WHICH HE COMMANDED 1969-1972. LED HONDURAN CONTINGENT IN INTER-AMERICAN PEACE FORCE IN DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN 1965.  
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PAGE 02 TEGUCI 03743 082002Z

BECAME SOMETHING OF NATIONAL HERO DURING 1969 WAR WITH EL SALVADOR FOR STOPPING SALVADOREAN ADVANCE. IN 1972 BECAME NATIONAL POLICE COMMANDER (FUSEP), AND IN 1975, CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES. THOUGH A CAPABLE ADMINISTRATOR AND POPULAR WITH ARMED FORCES, PAZ IS MAN OF AVERAGE INTELLIGENCE WHO OWED CAREER IN GOOD PART TO GENERAL MELGAR, OF WHOM HE WAS SOMEWHAT OF A PROTEGE. HE LACKS LATTER'S POPULARITY WITH MAN-IN-STREET AND ACCEPTANCE

BY CIVIL ELITE. PAZ HAS HAD A DRINKING PROBLEM BUT IN RECENT MONTHS HAS MADE A DETERMINED, AND APPARENTLY SUCCESSFUL, ATTEMPT TO CONTROL IT. AS ARMED FORCES COMMANDER, PAZ ENJOYED THE SUPPORT OF THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL AGAINST THE MORE POLITICALLY ORIENTED MELGAR.

3. DOMINGO ANTONIO ALVAREZ CRUZ. BORN 1940 IN TELA. ENTERED AIR FORCE IN 1958. STUDIED AT NUMEROUS MILITARY AVIATION SCHOOLS IN US. HAS HELD SUCH POSITIONS AS PILOT INSTRUCTOR, AEROBATICS DEMONSTRATION TEAM PILOT, INTELLIGENCE OFFICER AND CHIEF OF FLIGHT INSTRUCTORS IN AIR FORCE. ASSUMED PRESENT POSITION AS COMMANDER OF THE AIR FORCE IN 1975. SPEAKS SPANISH AND FLUENT ENGLISH. REPORTEDLY HAS STRONG DISLIKE FOR US POLICIES AND ACTIONS IN LATIN AMERICA AND IS HOT AND COLD IN HIS RELATIONS TO AMERICANS GENERALLY. HOWEVER, THIS MAY ALSO REFLECT ALVAREZ' HIGH DEGREE OF NATIONALISM AND RESENTMENT OVER US AIRCRAFT SALES RESTRICTIONS. ALVAREZ HAS CONFIDED HIS INTENTIONS TO BE PRESIDENT OF HONDURAS BEFORE REACHING THE AGE OF 40 (WITH TWO YEARS TO GO HE MAY BE RIGHT ON SCHEDULE). VIEWS ON COMMUNISM UNKNOWN, BUT BELONGED TO FACTION OF SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL THAT ADVOCATED GREATER LAND REFORM MEASURES. IT IS UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT HE COULD HAVE REACHED HIS PRESENT POSITION IF HE WERE IDENTIFIED WITH GROUP OF "PROGRESSIVE" OFFICERS WHO HAVE OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS BEEN REMOVED FROM POSITIONS OF INFLUENCE (SEE AGAIN TEGUCIGALPA A-8 AND 044).

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PAGE 03 TEGUCI 03743 082002Z

4. AMILCAR ZELAYA RODRIGUEZ. BORN [Sensitive Information Removed Per NARA 12 DEC 2014], IN LA CEIBA. ENTERED ARMY IN 1957, ROSE THROUGH RANKS TO ACHIEVE PRESENT RANK IN 1973. COMMANDED SECOND INFANTRY BATTALION IN 1975 THEN TOOK OVER THIRD BATTALION (AT SAN PEDRO SULA) THIS YEAR. HARD-DRIVING COMMANDER, PARATROOPER AND RANGER, INTERESTED IN COUNTER INSURGENCY. ZELAYA HAS TRAVELED TO EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, URAGUAY, CANAL ZONE, AND US (TO ATTEND POLICE AND CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION COURSE IN WASHINGTON IN 1964). SPEAKS ONLY SPANISH. HAS REPUTATION AS TRAINED INTELLIGENCE OFFICER, ALSO AS THE MOST "MACHO" COMMANDER IN ARMY. FRIENDLY TO US AND STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST.  
JARAMILLO

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## Message Attributes

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